

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022*

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia in Tokyo, Japan**  
*May 24, 2022*

*President Biden.* Well, Mr. Prime Minister, welcome. Welcome. I know you've been on the job a long time.

*Prime Minister Albanese.* Thank you. *[Laughter]* All over it.

*President Biden.* All over it. I'm sure you will be. And I appreciate you making the effort to be here so quickly. You're such a critical part of the Quad, and your absence would have been—made a big difference—a negative difference.

And—as I said earlier, I appreciate your determination to get here so quickly. And I—it's testament to Australia being all in on our shared vision on what we have to do.

I think that it's important to demonstrate that in democracies, we have the power to deliver from—and it comes from our people—and that it's real.

And so I hope your people are prepared to understand why you got up here so quickly. And we appreciate it.

I'm looking forward to having a chance to get to know you a bit and more personally. I always get kidded by Barack Obama when I would say to him, "All politics is personal." I'm looking forward to a personal relationship with you, because I think it's critical.

The alliance between Australia and the United States has long been an anchor of stability and prosperity I—in the Indo-Pacific, our nations have stood shoulder to shoulder in every conflict since World War I. And I'm proud that our alliances is strong as it's ever been, and I'm sure it will even get stronger with your leadership.

So thank you for coming to Tokyo, Mr. Prime Minister. Congratulations again on your election. And the floor is yours.

*Prime Minister Albanese.* Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. And it's been an honor to start my Prime Ministership and the new government with meetings with yourself and also with Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Modi.

Australia and the United States are great friends. Many years ago, a young fellow—myself in my—in my twenties, I was a guest of your State Department with the State Department program and had 5 weeks in the—in the U.S.

Diverse—we went to I—they had a program, which was—you could design a theme, and mine was—I wanted to see the interaction of groups with the U.S. Government. So I did everything from the National Rifle Association to the Sierra Club to Planned Parenthood to the full kit and caboodle, across the spectrum. *[Laughter]*

*[At this point, President Biden rose from his seat and pretended to walk away. He then shook hands with Prime Minister Albanese and continued his remarks as follows.]*

*President Biden.* You're a brave man. *[Laughter]*

*Prime Minister Albanese.* I am.

*President Biden.* You're a brave man. *[Laughter]*

*Prime Minister Albanese.* I am.

*President Biden.* [Inaudible]

[*President Biden returned to his seat.*]

*Prime Minister Albanese.* But it was an——

*President Biden.* The Sierra Club and the National Rifle.

*Prime Minister Albanese.* ——an opportunity to see the full diversity of the way that the country operates. And as well, of course, they do—you do dinners in people's homes as well, who host you. And it was a chance to really immerse myself there.

And I had security briefings in Hawaii on the way back. And the U.S. State Department was good enough as well to manage to justify a trip to Vegas as well. [*Laughter*] I'm not quite sure—I'm not quite sure where that fitted in, but it was a good trip indeed.

And of course, my government is very committed to the alliance. We're very proud of the fact that the alliance was forged by John Curtin during World War II—that we turned to America. And that led, in the postwar, to what we've just celebrated as the 70th anniversary of the formal alliance, but it really began when our country was under threat. And we commemorated as well, recently, the 80th anniversary of USS *Peary* in Darwin, the American loss of life. And we've been friends ever since.

And we play a very important role, in terms of national security, for us, but for our region as well. I was a part of the government that brought the U.S. marines to Darwin——

*President Biden.* Know that.

*Prime Minister Albanese.* ——under Julia Gillard, which was a very important move. And I look forward to really strengthening our relationship.

I've been a participant—we last met when you were Vice President under my participation in the Australia American Leadership Dialogue—I've done for many, many years—and that's an important body. And I've known some of your colleagues, Kurt in particular, for some time through that process as well.

*President Biden.* I apologize for that—[inaudible]. [*Laughter*]

*Prime Minister Albanese.* He's a good guy.

*President Biden.* He's a great guy.

*Prime Minister Albanese.* I quote him regularly. So——

*President Biden.* So do I. [*Laughter*]

*Prime Minister Albanese.* He's very important.

So thank you, Mr. President, for your congratulations and your warm welcome. And I look forward to welcoming you down to the Quad Leaders' Meeting next year. But also, my intention to thank you to—I will be visiting the U.S. before then. I look forward to——

*President Biden.* I'd like to invite you to the U.S.——

*Prime Minister Albanese.* ——to that.

*President Biden.* ——well before then.

*Prime Minister Albanese.* Thank you.

*President Biden.* And maybe we can work out a time sooner than later, but you are going to have to be home at some point. [*Laughter*] [*Inaudible*]

*Prime Minister Albanese.* Indeed. It's working out okay so far. [*Laughter*]

*President Biden.* Well, thank you very much.

Thank you, press.

*Prime Minister Albanese.* Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:21 p.m. at the Kantei, the official residence of the Prime Minister of Japan. In his remarks, he referred to former President Barack Obama; and National Security Council Coordinator for the Indo-Pacific Kurt Campbell. Prime Minister Albanese referred to Prime Minister Fumio Kishida of Japan; Prime Minister Modi of India; and former Prime Minister Julia E. Gillard of Australia. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

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